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Funding problems to delay new highway projects

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Federal funding problems are forcing the Arizona Department of Transportation to delay action on new construction projects around the state.

Among the highways affected are U.S. 60 near Wickenburg and U.S. 93 south of the Hoover Dam - roads driven by Valley residents to and from Las Vegas. These highways were slated to be widened, with work beginning in the next few months.

But U.S. Transportation Secretary Mary Peters announced Friday the federal Highway Trust Fund will be out of money by the end of the month. The trust fund is replenished through a tax on gasoline, but high fuel prices cut down on Americans' driving. In turn, the government collected \$200million less than expected this federal fiscal year, which ends Sept. 30.

According to ADOT, the only projects that will be affected are those scheduled to begin between now and the end of the state's fiscal year next June. Projects already under way will continue.

The projects are:

U.S. 93 widening between Hoover Dam and Milepost 17.

State Route 85 widening north of Gila Bend (Mileposts 130-138).

U.S. 60 widening near Wickenburg (Mileposts 110-112).

Interstate 10/Interstate 19 interchange improvements near Tucson.

Interstate 17 improvements at McGuireville, northeast of Camp Verde.

U.S. 60 widening between Globe and Superior.



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